

CLAIMS

[0038] The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. In lightbank apparatus, which includes a collapsible primary shroud mounted on, and extending outwardly from, a frame, wherein the primary shroud is supported in axially and radially extended configuration by a plurality of primary shroud support rods, which are connected at their respective proximal ends to the frame and extend along the primary shroud to their respective distal ends at a primary distal border of the primary shroud; an improvement comprising:

an attachable and detachable shroud extension, which includes: (i) a ring of flexible material having an extension proximal border, which conforms in size and shape to the primary distal border of the primary shroud, and an extension distal border at a distance spaced axially outward from the extension proximal border, said extension distal border being larger in circumference than the extension proximal border; (ii) a plurality of extension rods positioned in circumferentially spaced relation to each other around the shroud extension such that each of said extension rods extends from its proximal end at the extension proximal border to its distal end at the extension distal border; (iii) extension rod connectors, which are configured to connect the proximal ends of the extension rods axially to the distal ends of the primary shroud support rods in a detachable manner; and (iv) mating border connectors on the extension proximal border and the primary distal border which are configured to connect the extension proximal border to the primary distal border in a detachable manner;

whereupon the primary shroud is usable alone for a lightbank of a primary size, but, with the shroud extension attached is also useable alternatively for a lightbank that is larger axially and radially than the primary size.

2. The improvement of claim 1, including an extension light diffuser sheet, which has a peripheral edge that matches in size and shape to the extension distal border when the shroud extension is mounted on and extending axially from the primary shroud, said extension light diffuser sheet including connectors around its peripheral edge configured to detachably connect the extension light diffuser sheet to the shroud extension adjacent the distal border.

3. The improvement of claim 1, wherein the extension rod connectors include a ferrule on the distal end of each primary shroud support rod and a protruding end that is sized and shaped to receive and retain the proximal end of one of the extension rods.

4. The improvement of claim 3, wherein the proximal end of the extension rod has an axial hole, and wherein the protruding end of the ferrule has a shaft that is sized and shaped to fit slideably, but snugly, in the axial hole in the proximal end of the extension rod.

5. The improvement of claim 4, wherein the protruding end of the ferrule has an axial hole, and wherein the proximal end of the extension rod is sized and shaped to fit slideably, but snugly, in the axial hole in the ferrule.

6. The improvement of claim 3, wherein the ferrule on the distal end of each primary shroud support rod has an annular shoulder extending radially outward in relation to the protruding end, and wherein there are a plurality of grommets in the fabric primary shroud adjacent the distal border of the fabric primary shroud, said grommets each having an inner diameter that is large enough to accommodate passage of the protruding end of the ferrule

through the grommet but small enough so that the annular shoulder of the ferrule is not passable through the grommet.

7. Wherein the border connector includes hoop and loop fastener components extending around the extension proximal border and around the primary distal border.

8. The improvement of claim 2, wherein the connectors around the peripheral edge of the extension light diffuser include hook and loop fastener components that releasably connect to mating hook and loop fastener components on the shroud extension adjacent the extension distal border.

9. The improvement of claim 1, wherein the lightbank apparatus includes a primary light diffuser sheet with a peripheral edge that matches in size and shape to the primary distal border of the primary shroud, including mating connectors adjacent the peripheral edge of the primary light diffuser and adjacent the primary distal border configured to detachably connect the primary light diffuser to the primary shroud, and further wherein the mating connectors adjacent the primary distal end of the primary shroud that mate with and connect to the connectors adjacent the peripheral edge of the primary light diffuser are positioned adjacent, but axially inward in relation to the border connector on primary shroud that mates with the border connector on the extension proximal border, so that the primary light diffuser is attachable to the primary shroud without interfering with attachment of the shroud extension to the primary distal border of the primary shroud.

10. A method of enlarging a lightbank, which includes a collapsible primary shroud mounted on, and extending outwardly from, a frame, wherein the primary shroud is supported in axially and radially extended configuration by a plurality of primary shroud support rods, which are connected at their respective proximal ends to the frame and extend along the primary shroud

to their respective distal ends at a primary distal border of the primary shroud, said method including:

exposing the distal ends of the primary shroud support rods;

connecting proximal ends of a plurality of extension rods, which support an extension ring, to the distal ends of the primary shroud support rods in a detachable manner; and

attaching a proximal border of the extension ring in a detachable manner to the primary shroud adjacent the primary distal border.

11. The method of claim 10, including attaching a circumferential edge of an extension diffuser panel in a detachable manner to the extension ring adjacent a distal extension border of the extension ring so that the extension diffuser panel substantially encloses the distal end of the diffuser ring.